

The Next Generation of Cosmetic Enhancements

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With a sizzling hot season in full swing, everyone wants to feel fantastic in their own skin. Luckily, looking fresh and lively is easier than you might think. The world of cosmetic medicine has changed dramatically in recent years, and a proliferation of next-gen treatments now offer subtle, natural-looking results, often without even having to go under the scalpel.

More people than ever seem interested in cosmetic procedures, and the data proves it. [According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons](#), the number of total cosmetic procedures peaked at 17.5 million in 2017, a 2 percent increase from 2016. While 1.8 million surgical procedures like liposuction and tummy tucks were conducted in this time, the majority—15.7 million—were minimally invasive procedures like facial fillers and chemical peels. Whether you're hoping to tone up before that weekend getaway to Martha's Vineyard or you'd like to show off a whiter smile in your summer snapshots, here's some advice from local experts on how you can enhance your natural beauty.

Less can be more

Facial treatments go beyond just facelifts. New and minimally invasive procedures are created and perfected every day in an attempt to avoid surgery, while patients craving instant gratification are still open to the operating table for traditional surgeries. Ultimately, it all depends on what is best for the patient and their face.

"Anyone possibly considering facial plastic surgery should start by having a consultation and get properly informed about their options," says Dr. Raffi Der Sarkissian, a double board-certified plastic surgeon with [Boston Facial Plastic Surgery](#), focusing specifically on the face and neck. "All too often, a patient will say, 'My friend had fillers and she looks great' or 'I need a facelift.' But upon proper analysis, we find a different treatment would serve them better."

Dr. Der Sarkissian notes that there is no typical patient or treatment in either his Boston or Quincy locations; on a daily basis, he sees a broad range of clientele, from 20-year-olds seeking preventative skin care techniques and peels, to patients over 50 who are reentering the workforce



and looking to regain a youthful glow. For all ages, he urges the importance of avoiding Hollywood trends or practices offering packages and discount deals on multiple procedures, believing aesthetic facial treatments should be individualized. And, in his experience, less is usually more.

"There is a fine line between enough and too much with respect to facial enhancements," says Dr. Der Sarkissian. "Faces devoid of expression, overfilled lips or cheeks, and overtightened faces may just look a little weird; not necessarily younger or healthier."

He says the most requested summer treatments include gentle lasers and peels that won't make the skin sensitive to the sun, and minimally invasive treatments for lip contour and cheek volume.

Most facial treatments do tend to target the lips, cheeks, and forehead, but Wellesley plastic surgeon [Dr. Jeannie Chung](#) says it's the eyes that show the most signs of aging. "Whether it's due to loose skin, excess fatty bags, or crepe-like skin texture, eyes can make you look tired," Dr. Chung says. She combats droopy eyelids and dark hollows under the eyes with Restylane or Voluma fillers, but recommends surgery for serious under-eye woes.

And here's an eye-opening fact: Last year alone, 209,571 eyelid surgeries (also known as upper or lower blepharoplasty) were performed across the country. The high demand stems from the ease, since the surgery can usually be performed in the office in an hour or under. Stitches are removed a few days following the surgery and recovery time is only a few weeks. "In our practice, eyelid surgery continues to be the most popular cosmetic, surgical procedure," says Dr. Chung. "It's an effective way to brighten the appearance of the eyes, creating a more youthful and restful appearance."

At the [Aesthetic Wellness Center](#) in Westborough, Dr. Min S. Ahn says summer is usually the ideal time for patients to schedule more in-depth procedures like rhinoplasties, facelifts, and neck lifts. Dr. Ahn's patients range in ages from 16 to 75, so the season is ideal for both school closings and slower office hours with more availability to take time off.

An increasingly popular treatment among his patients is radiofrequency, which serves to tighten the skin, lift jowls, and improve the upper neck area. "Fractora is a fractioned radiofrequency treatment that tightens the face, neck, and décolletage skin with very little downtime," he says. "We include Fractora treatments in our face and neck lifts to complement the surgery and tighten the skin." The subdermal tissue coagulation device is an effort that lies somewhere between fractional lasers and surgical procedures.

Another radiofrequency treatment, FaceTite, is a minimally invasive procedure that concentrates 100 percent of its energy to the treatment zone with a uniform thermal field for an even distribution of heat. It approaches surgical tightening of the jowls and neck with no incisions in half the time of surgery. "It's the next best option before a facelift or mini-lift," says Dr. Ahn. "Our patients love how they look like a refreshed, younger version of themselves. We receive many compliments on how natural the results are."

Following the trend of quicker and easier facial treatments, [Skin Rx Boston](#) in Dorchester is the city's first and only cosmetic injectable boutique. The practice solely specializes in nonsurgical facial rejuvenation with cosmetic injectables. The derma fillers are hyaluronic acid-based, a sugar molecule naturally found in the human body; an enzyme can break down the filler to reverse the effects if needed.

While the process is treated as simple as any visit to a salon, owner and certified aesthetic nurse specialist Maria

Gagliardi assures her clients that Skin Rx doesn't cut corners when it comes to treatment and care. Administering only FDA-approved injectables, each patient is assessed, screened, and approved for treatment based upon if they're a candidate or not. Pre- and post-instructions and instructions from the manufacturer are provided for all treatments. "We use the most advanced and safest techniques," Gagliardi says. "Our protocols and procedures maximize the chances for the best outcomes."

She says a key benefit of nonsurgical solutions is the gradual series of treatments, allowing the budget-friendly results to seem as natural as possible. Plus, the ease of the boutique setting is appealing to everyone, not just Gagliardi's usual clientele of women ages 35 to 55. "More recently, younger patients and men are growing at a rapid pace," she says. "Millennials are interested in prevention or tastefully injected fuller lips, and baby boomers want more global rejuvenation from the frown lines, mid-cheek, lower face, and a more defined jawline."

As far as the most popular options, Gagliardi swears by the tried and true reigning champ of nonsurgical treatments. "Botox Cosmetic is a game changer," she says. "It makes your skin look better and your eyes look brighter."

But that doesn't mean Skin Rx is limiting their inventory. The practice is always open to new fillers and nonsurgical products to revolutionize their approach to cosmetic enhancement and augmentation. "The technological advancements continue to improve and bring more solutions for treating patients and offering solutions for their concerns," says Gagliardi. "I think we're going to see more and more products come to the market in the next few years. Right now, the sky is the limit on where the industry is headed."

From hair help to skin solutions and surgical procedures, this season should be all about you and achieving your best self under the guidance of helpful, certified professionals. "Make sure you are doing this for yourself and tune out any naysayers or people who are quick to judge," says Dr. Ahn. "After all, studies have shown that people who receive cosmetic enhancements are healthier, happier, and more satisfied with their quality of life."

And who wouldn't want that?

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